

AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

Claim 1 (Currently Amended) A customer management system comprising a home appliance device connectable to a home network and a management apparatus operable to manage information concerning a customer, said home appliance device and said management apparatus being connected to each other via ~~the~~ a network,

wherein said home appliance device includes:

_____ a reading unit operable to automatically read ~~the~~ customer information concerning the [[a]] customer via the home network from a recording medium included in another home appliance device connected to the home network;

_____ a manufacturing number holding-recording unit operable to hold a manufacturing number provided at a time of manufacturing ~~of~~ said home appliance device;

_____ a transmission record preparing unit operable to prepare a transmission record-
~~that describes~~ describing at least one of (i) function information assigned based on a form of use-
~~the basis of a usage form~~ of said home appliance device, (ii) the customer information, and (iii)
the manufacturing number; and

_____ a transmitting unit operable to transmit the transmission record to said management apparatus, and

wherein said management apparatus includes:

_____ a receiving unit operable to receive the transmission record transmitted by said transmitting unit of said home appliance device;

_____ a transmission record reading unit operable to read information described in the

received transmission record; and

_____an analysis unit operable to analyze the ~~read~~ information read by said
transmission record reading unit.

Claim 2 (Currently Amended) The customer management system according to claim 1,
wherein said analysis unit is operable to analyze a status of use based on ~~usage status of~~
the function information ~~used in each said home appliance device~~.

Claim 3 (Cancelled)

Claim 4 (Currently Amended) The customer management system according to claim 1,
wherein ~~the manufacturing number recorded in~~ said manufacturing number holding-
recording unit holds a manufacturing number that is unique to said home appliance device ~~is a~~
~~global unique number~~.

Claim 5 (Currently Amended) The customer management system according to claim 1,
wherein said management apparatus ~~further~~ includes:
a customer database operable to hold the customer information described ~~recorded~~ in the
received transmission record ~~having been received~~;
a merchandise database operable to hold the manufacturing number ~~merchandise-~~
~~information~~ described ~~recorded~~ in the received transmission record ~~having been received~~;
an analysis information database operable to hold an analysis result in said analysis unit;

and

a record updating unit operable to, after said receiving unit receives the transmission record, ~~update the record of the~~ customer information held ~~recorded~~ in said customer database, update the manufacturing number held in said merchandise database, and update the analysis result held in said analysis information database, ~~after the receiving of the transmission record.~~

Claim 6 (Currently Amended) The customer management system according to claim 5,

wherein said management apparatus ~~further~~ includes a determination unit operable to determine whether the customer information included in the received transmission record is ~~a new one~~ new customer information, and

wherein said record updating unit is operable to add ~~and register~~ the customer information into said customer database when said determination unit determines that the customer information is new customer information ~~in the case of being determined as a new one~~ by said determination unit.

Claim 7 (Currently Amended) The customer management system according to claim 1,

wherein said home appliance device ~~further~~ includes a first-time determination unit operable to determine whether the customer information has been read by said reading unit[[,]] at a time of first-time usage,

wherein said transmission record preparing unit is ~~further~~ operable to prepare a first-time transmission record including that includes at least the customer information and the manufacturing number, when said first-time determination unit determines that the customer

information has been read by said reading unit at the time of first-time usage~~the read of the~~
~~customer information by said reading unit is determined as being the first time by said first-time~~
~~determination unit, and~~

wherein said transmitting unit is operable to transmit the first-time transmission record to
said management apparatus.

Claim 8 (Currently Amended) The customer management system according to claim 7,
wherein said home appliance device ~~further~~ includes a device control unit operable to bring said
home appliance device into a usage permitted state after the first-time transmission record has
been~~is~~ transmitted by said transmitting unit.

Claim 9 (Currently Amended) A home appliance device connected to a home network and
connected, via a network, to a management apparatus that is provided on a manufacturer side and
that manages~~operable to manage~~ information concerning a customer, said home appliance
device comprising:

a reading unit operable to automatically read~~the~~ customer information concerning the
customer via the home network from a recording medium included in another home appliance
device connected to the home network;

a manufacturing number holding~~recording~~ unit operable to hold a manufacturing number
provided at a time of manufacturing ~~of~~ said home appliance device;

a transmission record preparing unit operable to prepare a transmission record ~~that~~
~~describes~~ describing at least one of (i) function information assigned based on a form of use~~on~~

~~the basis of a usage form~~ of said home appliance device, (ii) the customer information, and (iii) the manufacturing number; and

a transmitting unit operable to transmit the transmission record to the management apparatus.

Claim 10 (Currently Amended) The home appliance device according to claim 9,

wherein said home appliance device includes ~~further comprises~~ a first-time determination unit operable to determine whether the customer information has been read by said reading unit[[,]] at a time of first-time usage,

wherein said transmission record preparing unit is ~~further~~ operable to prepare a first-time transmission record including ~~that includes at least~~ the customer information and the manufacturing number, when said first-time determination unit determines that the customer information has been read by said reading unit at the time of first-time usage ~~the read of the customer information by said reading unit is determined as being the first time by said first-time determination unit~~, and

wherein said transmitting unit is operable to transmit the first-time transmission record to the management apparatus.

Claim 11 (Currently Amended) The home appliance device according to claim 10, wherein said home appliance device includes ~~further comprises~~ a device control unit operable to bring said home appliance device into a usage permitted state after the first-time transmission record has been ~~is~~ transmitted by said transmitting unit.

Claim 12 (Currently Amended) A management apparatus that is connected to a home appliance device connectable to a home network,~~and~~ that is provided on a manufacturer side,~~and that manages and operable to manage~~ information concerning a customer, said management apparatus comprising:

a receiving unit operable to receive a transmission record describing at least one of (i) function information assigned based on a form of use of the home appliance device, (ii) customer information concerning the customer, and (iii) a manufacturing number provided at a time of manufacturing the home appliance device, the transmission record being transmitted from the home appliance device;

a customer database that holds the customer information included in the received transmission record;

a transmission record reading unit operable to read information described in the received transmission record; ~~and~~

a first-time determination unit operable to determine whether the received transmission record has been prepared at a time of first-time usage of the home appliance device, based on the information read by said transmission record reading unit;

a record updating unit operable to add the customer information included in the received transmission record to said customer database, when said first-time determination unit determines that the received transmission record was prepared at the time of first-time usage of the home appliance device; and

an analysis unit operable to analyze a ~~usage~~ status of use based on the ~~of~~ function

~~information used in each home appliance device, the status of use being analyzed based on the basis of the information read by said transmission record reading unit.~~

Claim 13 (Currently Amended) The management apparatus according to claim 12,

wherein said ~~management apparatus further comprises~~ a first-time determination unit is operable to determine whether the received transmission record was prepared at the time of first-time usage of the home appliance device by determining, from the information read by said transmission record reading unit, determine whether in the transmission record, the customer is a customer is a new customer one, or, whether a the combination of the [[a]] customer and the home appliance device is a new combination one, or whether the home appliance device is a new device one.

Claim 14 (Currently Amended) ~~A program~~ computer-readable recording medium having a program recorded thereon, the program for being used in a home appliance device connected, via a network, to a management apparatus that is provided on a manufacturer side and that manages operable to manage information concerning a customer, and connected to a home network, said program causing a computer to execute a method comprising:

a reading step of automatically reading the customer information concerning [[a]] the customer via the home network from a recording medium included in another home appliance device connected to the home network;

a manufacturing number holding-recording step of holding a manufacturing number provided at a time of manufacturing ~~of~~ the home appliance device;

a transmission record preparing step of preparing a transmission record describing that
~~describes~~ at least one of (i) function information assigned based on a form of use on the basis of
~~a usage form~~ of the home appliance device, (ii) the customer information, and (iii) the
manufacturing number; and

a transmission step of transmitting the transmission record to the management apparatus.

Claim 15 (Currently Amended) The ~~program~~ computer-readable recording medium
according to claim 14,

wherein the method includes ~~said program further comprises~~ a first-time determination
step of determining whether the customer information has been read ~~at~~ by said reading step[[,]]
at a time of first-time usage, ~~and~~

wherein ~~at~~ said transmission record preparing step includes preparing[[,]] a first-time
transmission record including that includes at least the customer information and the
manufacturing number ~~is prepared~~, when said first-time determination step determines that the
customer information has been read by said reading step at the time of first-time usage ~~the read~~
~~of the customer information at said reading step is determined as being the first time at said first-~~
~~time determination step~~, and

wherein ~~at~~ said transmission step includes transmitting[[,]] the first-time transmission
record ~~is transmitted~~ to the management apparatus.

Claim 16 (Currently Amended) The computer-readable recording medium ~~program~~
according to claim 15, wherein ~~said program~~ the method includes ~~further comprises~~ a device

control step of bringing the home appliance device into a usage permitted state after the first-time transmission record has been-is transmitted by-at said transmitting step.

Claim 17 (Currently Amended) A computer-readable recording medium having a program recorded thereon, the program for being used in a management apparatus that is connected to a home appliance device connectable to a home network, ~~and~~ that is provided on a manufacturer side, ~~and that manages operable to manage customer~~ information concerning a customer, said program causing a computer to execute a method comprising:

 a receiving step of receiving a transmission record describing at least one of (i) function information assigned based on a form of use of the home appliance device, (ii) customer information concerning the customer, and (iii) a manufacturing number provided at a time of manufacturing the home appliance device, the transmission record being transmitted from the home appliance device;

 a transmission record reading step of reading information described in the received transmission record; ~~and~~

a first-time determination step of determining whether the received transmission record has been prepared at a time of first usage of the home appliance device, based on the information read by said transmission record reading step;

a record updating step of adding the customer information included in the received transmission record to a customer database, when said first-time determination step determines that the received transmission record was prepared at the time of first-time usage of the home appliance device; and

an analysis step of analyzing a ~~usage~~ status of use based on the ~~of~~ function information-
used in each home appliance device, the status of use being analyzed based on the basis of the
information read ~~by~~ at said transmission record reading step.

Claim 18 (Currently Amended) A customer management method used in a home appliance
device connected to a home network and connected via a network to a management apparatus
that is provided on a manufacturer side, and that manages ~~operable to manage~~ information
concerning a customer, ~~said method comprising:~~

wherein the home appliance device includes:

a reading unit;

a manufacturing number holding unit;

a transmission record preparing unit; and

a transmission unit, and

wherein said customer management method comprises:

a reading step of automatically reading, by the reading unit via the home network,-
~~the~~ customer information concerning the ~~the~~ [[a]] customer from a recording medium included in
another home appliance device connected to the home network;

a manufacturing number holding-recording step of holding, by the manufacturing number
holding unit, a manufacturing number provided at a time of manufacturing ~~of~~ the home appliance
device;

a transmission record preparing step of preparing, by the transmission record preparing
unit, a transmission record describing ~~that describes~~ at least one of (i) function information

assigned ~~based on a form of use~~ on the basis of a usage form of the home appliance device, (ii) the customer information, and (iii) the manufacturing number; and

a transmission step of transmitting, by the transmission unit, the transmission record to the management apparatus.

Claim 19 (Currently Amended) The customer management method according to claim 18,

wherein the home appliance device includes a first-time determination unit,

wherein said customer management method ~~includes further comprises~~ a first-time determination step of determining, by the first-time determination unit, whether the customer information has been read ~~at~~ by said reading step[[,]] at a time of first-time usage, ~~and~~

wherein ~~at~~ said transmission record preparing step includes preparing[[,]] a first-time transmission record including that includes at least the customer information and the manufacturing number ~~is prepared~~, by the transmission record preparing unit, when said first-time determination step determines that the customer information has been read by said reading step at the time of first-time usage ~~the read of the customer information at said reading step is determined as being the first time at said first-time determination step~~, and

wherein ~~at~~ said transmission step includes transmitting[[,]] the first-time transmission record ~~is transmitted~~, by the transmitting unit, to the management apparatus.

Claim 20 (Currently Amended) The customer management method according to claim 19,

wherein the home appliance device includes a device control unit, and

wherein said customer management method ~~includes further comprises~~ a device control

step of bringing, by the device control unit, the home appliance device into a usage permitted state after the first-time transmission record has been-is transmitted by-at said transmitting step.

Claim 21 (Currently Amended) A customer management method used in a management apparatus that is connected to a home appliance device connectable to a home network, ~~and~~ that is provided on a manufacturer side, and that manages-operable to ~~manage~~ customer information concerning a customer, ~~said method comprising:~~

wherein the management apparatus includes:

a receiving unit;

a transmission record reading unit;

a first-time determining unit;

a record updating unit; and

an analysis unit,

wherein said customer management method comprises:

a receiving step of receiving, by the receiving unit, a transmission record describing at least one of (i) function information assigned based on a form of use of the home appliance device, (ii) customer information concerning the customer, and (iii) a manufacturing number provided at a time of manufacturing the home appliance device, the transmission record being transmitted from the home appliance device;

a transmission record reading step of reading, by the transmission record reading unit, information described in the received transmission record; ~~and~~

a first time determination step of determining, by the first-time determination unit,

whether the received transmission record has been prepared at a time of first-time usage of the home appliance device, based on the information read by said transmission record reading step;

a record updating step of adding, by the record updating unit, the customer information included in the received transmission record to a customer database, when said first-time determination step determines that the received transmission record was prepared at the time of first-time usage of the home appliance device; and

an analysis step of analyzing, by the analysis unit, a usage status of use based on the of function information used in each home appliance device, the status of use being analyzed based on the basis of the information read by at said transmission record reading step.